

TERROR



TALES

FROM THE



10¢

CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



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OR



NO. 23
APR.-MAY

10¢

TALES

FROM THE

CRYPT

AUTHORIZED
A. C. M. P.



10¢

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THE CRYPT-KEEPER



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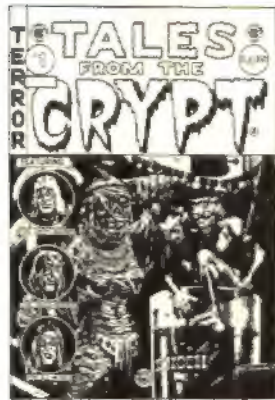
THE VAULT-KEEPER



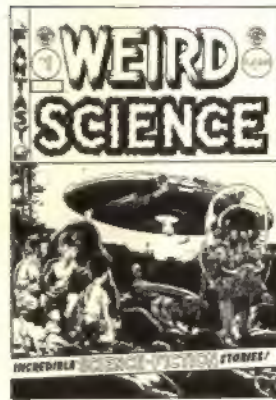
LOCKED... I'M LOCKED IN
THIS MAUSOLEUM WITH... WITH
THIS THING!

ELDSTEIN

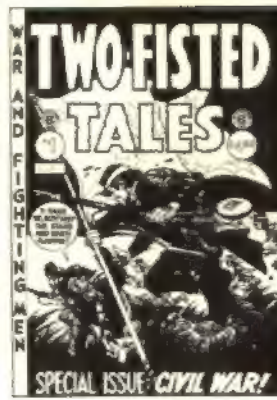
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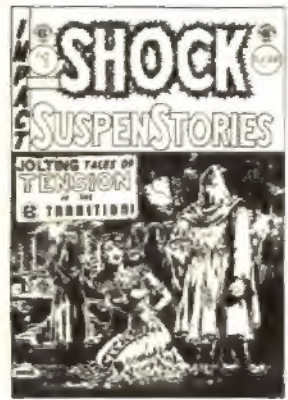
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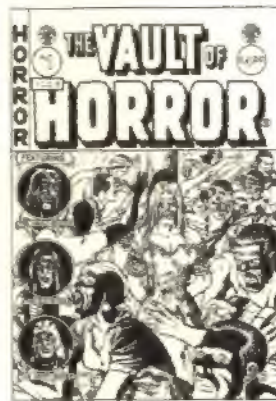
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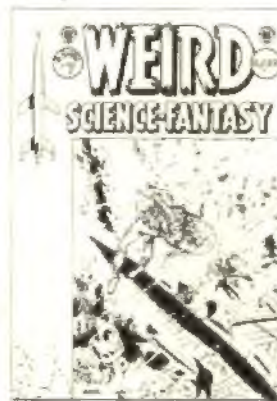
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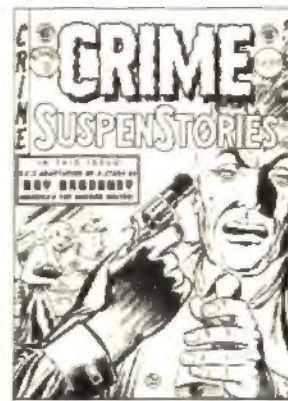
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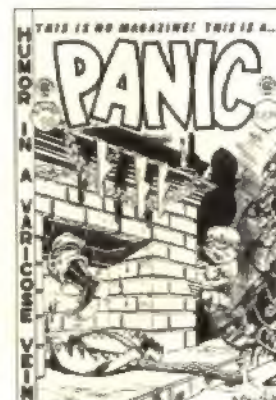
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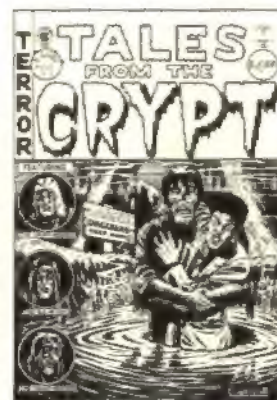
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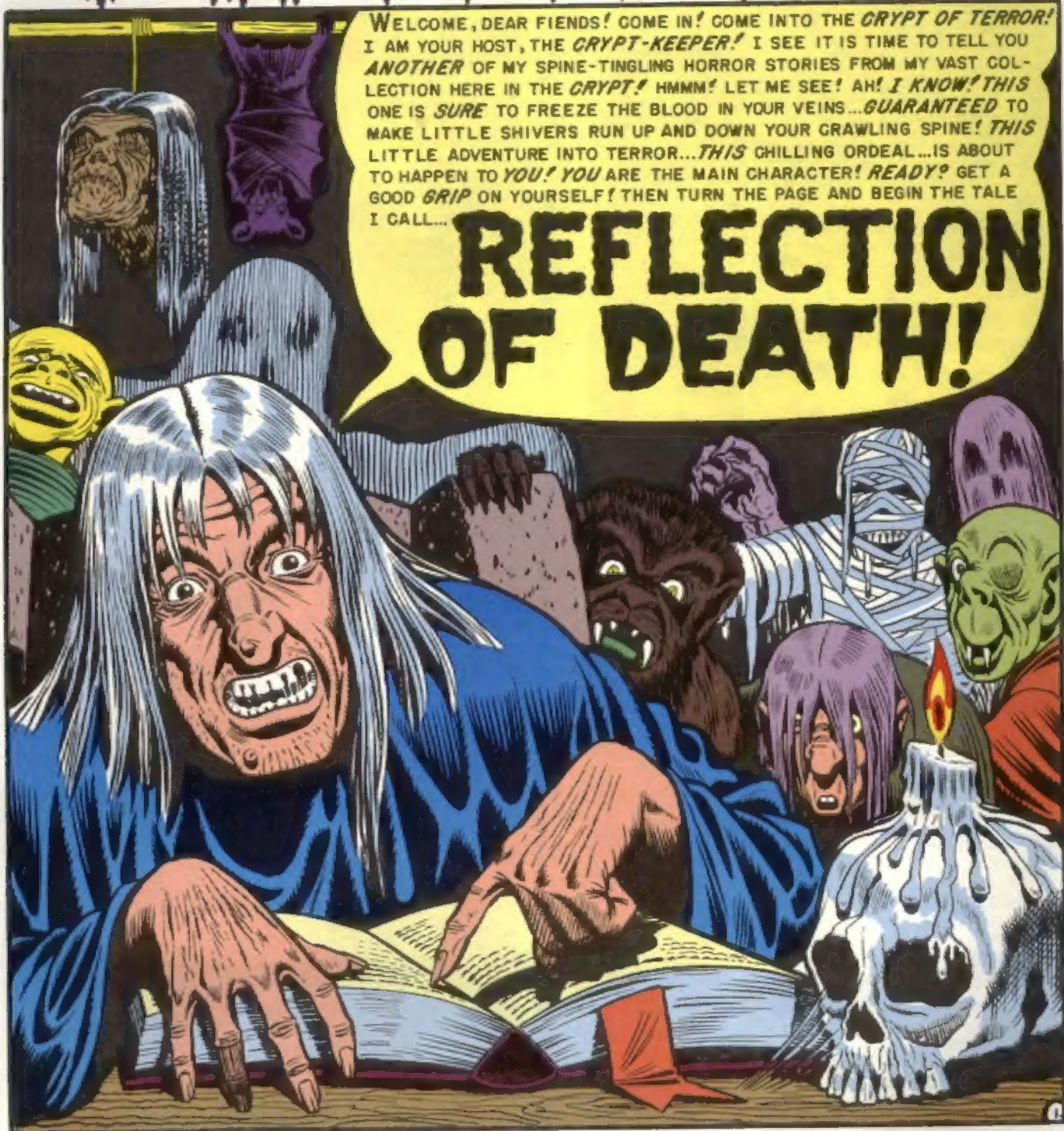
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THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME, DEAR FIENDS! COME IN! COME INTO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR!* I AM YOUR HOST, THE *CRYPT-KEEPER!* I SEE IT IS TIME TO TELL YOU *ANOTHER* OF MY SPINE-TINGLING HORROR STORIES FROM MY VAST COLLECTION HERE IN THE *CRYPT!* HMMM! LET ME SEE! AH! *I KNOW!* THIS ONE IS *SURE* TO FREEZE THE BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS...*GUARANTEED* TO MAKE LITTLE SHIVERS RUN UP AND DOWN YOUR GRAWLING SPINE! *THIS* LITTLE ADVENTURE INTO TERROR...*THIS* CHILLING ORDEAL...IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN TO *YOU!* YOU ARE THE MAIN CHARACTER! *READY?* GET A GOOD *GRIP* ON YOURSELF! THEN TURN THE PAGE AND BEGIN THE TALE I CALL...

REFLECTION OF DEATH!



AHEAD OF YOU, THE WHITE LINE THAT DIVIDES THE ROAD STRETCHES INTO THE DARKNESS BEYOND YOUR HEADLIGHT BEAM! BESIDE YOU, CARL SITS PUFFING ON A CIGARETTE...

GETTING PRETTY COLD, ISN'T IT, CARL?

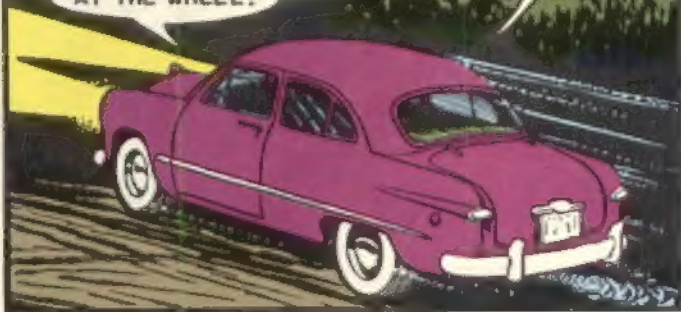
YEAH! AND THE HEATER'S ON THE FRITZ, TOO! IT'S GOOD WE WORE WARM CLOTHES!



YOU'RE AT THE WHEEL! YOU AND CARL HAVE BEEN DRIVING SINCE DAYBREAK! IN TWO MORE HOURS, YOU'LL BE HOME! YOU'RE TIRED, NOW! THE STRAIN OF DRIVING THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND INTO THE NIGHT IS BEGINNING TO HAVE ITS EFFECT! YOUR EYELIDS ARE *HEAVY*.. THEY KEEP *CLOSING*...

YOU'D BETTER TAKE OVER, CARL! I'M GETTING TIRED! I'D HATE TO FALL ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL!

OKAY, AL! PULL OVER AND WE'LL SWITCH!



YOU STOP THE CAR AND CARL GETS OUT! YOU SLIDE ACROSS THE SEAT AND CARL SLIPS BEHIND THE WHEEL...

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A SNOOZE, AL? I'LL WAKE YOU UP WHEN WE GET TO TOWN!

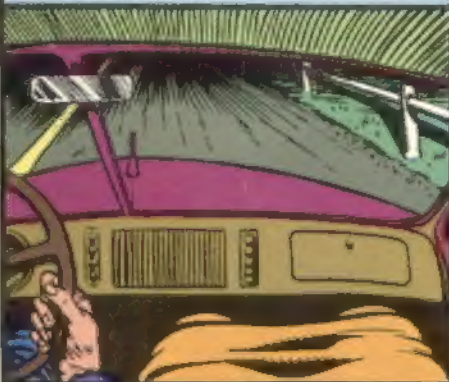
MAYBE... MAYBE I WILL, CARL!



YOU DRAW YOUR COAT UP TIGHT AROUND YOU...PULL YOUR HAT DOWN... REACH INTO YOUR POCKET FOR YOUR GLOVES...



YOU STARE OUT THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD! THE ROAD COMES OUT OF THE DARKNESS AT YOU AND SLIDES BENEATH THE CAR...UNENDING... FASTER... FASTER! CARL BEGINS TO WHISTLE AN OFF-KEY TUNE! THE MOTOR PURRS... THE ROAD COMES ON...ON...

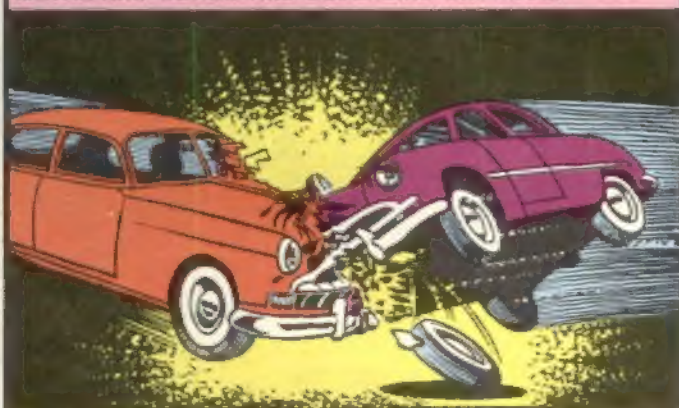


YOUR HEAD BEGINS TO NOD! CARL'S WHISTLING CONTINUES...FLAT...UNMELODIC! SUDDENLY HE GASPS! YOU LOOK UP! A PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS...BRIGHT...BLINDING... HURTLES AT YOU FROM THE DARKNESS! CARL SHOUTS! YOU TRY TO SCREAM BUT IT CHOKES UP IN YOUR THROAT...A RATTLING COUGH...

LOOK OUT...AL...WE'RE GOING TO HIT...



THERE IS A SPLINTERING SHRIEKING CRASH OF METAL AND GLASS AND SQUEALING BRAKES...



YOU FEEL YOURSELF FLYING FORWARD...A BLASTING LIGHT...THE PAIN...THE COLD...AND THEN THE VELVET NIGHT CLOSES IN! ALL IS QUIET, EXCEPT FOR A DISTANT... FAR AWAY...WHIMPERING...

THE BLACKNESS IS EMPTY... ETERNAL! YOU FLOAT IN IT... TURNING... TWISTING... FALLING... THEN RISING AGAIN! THE PAIN IS GONE... EVERYTHING IS GONE... ONLY THE DARKNESS... ON... ON... DARK... BLACK... EMPTY...



YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! TINY PIN-POINTS OF LIGHT BLINK BRIGHT AND DIM BEFORE YOU! A LEAF FLUTTERS... THEN GLIDES AT YOU! YOU ARE ON YOUR BACK... GAZING UP AT THE NIGHT SKY...



YOU RAISE YOUR HEAD AND LOOK ABOUT! YOU ARE LYING AT THE EDGE OF A ROAD! YOU REMEMBER NOW! THE HEADLIGHTS... THE CRASH... THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A COLLISION! BUT THE WRECK... THERE'S NO SIGN OF IT...

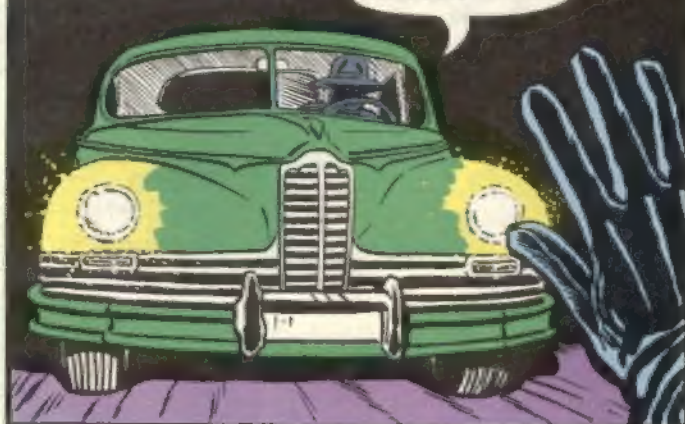


YOU GET TO YOUR FEET! YOUR CLOTHES ARE TORN AND DIRTY! THERE IS A SMELL... A SICKENING SMELL! YOU LOOK UP AND DOWN THE ROAD! NO SMASHED GLASS! NO TWISTED METAL! NOTHING! JUST A ROAD... CLEAN... WHITE... REACHING INTO THE NIGHT...



A CAR IS COMING! YOU STUMBLE OUT ONTO THE CONCRETE! YOU RAISE YOUR GLOVED HAND AS THE CAR BEARS DOWN UPON YOU! ITS WAILING BRAKES BRING IT TO A STOP...

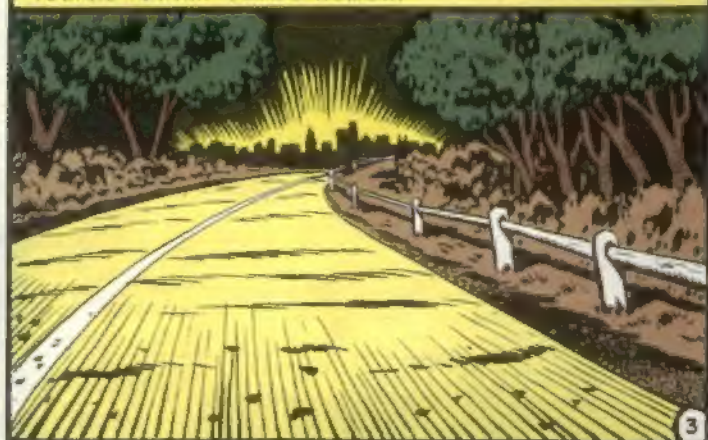
CRAZY FOOL! DO YOU WANT TO GET YOURSELF KILLED? I... I...



YOU STEP CLOSE TO HIM! YOU BEGIN TO ASK HIM IF HE'LL DRIVE YOU INTO TOWN... THAT THERE'S BEEN A WRECK! SUDDENLY YOU SEE THE WILD LOOK IN HIS EYES! A LOOK OF *STARK TERROR*! HE STARES AT YOU AND *SHRIEKS*...



THE CAR MESHES GEARS AND ROARS AWAY! YOU CAN HEAR HIM SCREAMING! YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND! THEN YOU LAUGH TO YOURSELF! OF COURSE! YOU MUST HAVE BEEN CUT IN THE ACCIDENT! MAYBE THE SIGHT OF BLOOD SCARED HIM! YOU START DOWN THE ROAD... TOWARD TOWN... TOWARD HOME...



THEN YOU SEE IT! THE FIRE! SOME-ONE UNDER THE ROAD-BRIDGE... COOKING! YOU MOVE TOWARD HIM! PERHAPS HE HEARD THE CRASH... SAW THE ACCIDENT...



IT IS A HOBO... A TRAMP HUDDLED NEAR THE FIRE! HE STIRS SOMETHING IN A CAN HUNG OVER THE FLAMES! HE LOOKS UP AS YOU APPROACH...



WELCOME, PARDNER! IF YOU'RE HUNGRY, SET YOURSELF DOWN! THE STEW'S JUST ABOUT DONE!

YOU MOVE INTO THE FIRELIGHT! HE LOOKS INTO THE CAN... STIRS IT A BIT... THEN TURNS TOWARD YOU! SUDDENLY THE BLOOD DRAINS FROM HIS UNSHAVEN FACE! HE CRINGES...



THE TRAMP CLAWS HIS WAY UP TO THE EMBANKMENT AND RUNS, SHRIEKING, DOWN THE ROAD! YOU WATCH HIM AS HE VANISHES INTO THE NIGHT...



YOU CONTINUE ON TOWARD TOWN! YOU'VE GOT TO GET HELP! THEN YOU STOP! YOU LOOK DOWN! A PIECE OF A NEWSPAPER IS UNDER YOUR FOOT! YOU READ THE DATE...



IT CAN'T BE! FEBRUARY 26TH, 1951! IMPOSSIBLE! THAT'S ALMOST TWO MONTHS FROM NOW! TODAY... TODAY IS JANUARY 1ST! YOU AND CARL HAD BEEN RETURNING FROM A NEW YEARS EVE PARTY! YOU HAD BEEN DRIVING ALL DAY... NEW YEARS DAY! NOW IT'S NEW YEARS NIGHT! OR IS IT? ANOTHER CAR IS COMING! YOU PUT THE PAPER IN YOUR POCKET AND STEP OUT ONTO THE ROAD...



SHE'S FRIGHTENED! WHAT WOMAN WOULDN'T BE? A LONELY ROAD AT NIGHT! YOU... A STRANGE MAN... STEPPING OUT IN FRONT OF HER CAR... FORCING HER TO STOP OR HIT YOU! OF COURSE SHE'S FRIGHTENED...



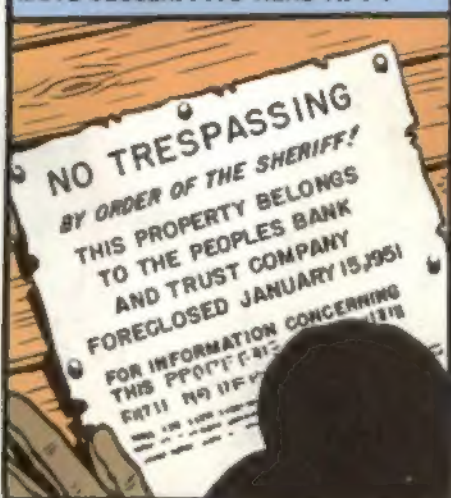
YOU ARE ABOUT TO TELL HER NOT TO BE AFRAID... THAT YOU MEAN NO HARM! BUT THERE IS NO TIME! SHE LOOKS AT YOU... HER EYES ROLL... SHE GURGLES A FAINT GROAN AND FAINTS...



YOU GET INTO HER CAR! YOU DRIVE IT INTO THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN AND LEAVE IT... THE WOMAN UNCONSCIOUS BEHIND THE WHEEL! YOU MAKE YOUR WAY HOME... HOME! BUT WHEN YOU REACH IT...



THE WINDOWS ARE BOARDED UP! YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND! THERE IS A SIGN TACKLED TO THE HOUSE! YOU MOVE CLOSER... TO READ IT...



FORECLOSED! ON JANUARY 15, 1951! BUT TODAY IS... OR IS IT? THE NEWSPAPER YOU FOUND! REMEMBER? HAVE YOU BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR ALMOST *TWO MONTHS*? YOU TURN AWAY FROM THE HOUSE! A LONE FIGURE APPROACHES ON THE DESERTED DARK STREET...



YOU WALK TOWARD HIM! YOU WANT TO ASK HIM THE DATE! HE COMES CLOSER! THEN HE SEES YOU...



HE BEGINS TO RUN FROM YOU! YOU RUN AFTER HIM! YOU ONLY WANT TO ASK HIM A *QUESTION*! WHY DOES EVERYONE *STARE* AT YOU *WIDE-EYED*... *FAINT*... *SCREAM*... *RUN* FROM YOU? *WHY*? CARL'S HOUSE! YOU'RE IN FRONT OF CARL'S HOUSE NOW! CARL... WHO WAS WITH YOU... WHEN THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED! YOU GO UP THE STEPS... STAND BEFORE THE DOOR... RING THE BELL...



HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACH! THE DOOR OPENS! CARL STARES OUT AT YOU! YOU WAIT FOR HIM TO SCREAM... TO RUN... WAIT FOR THAT LOOK OF HORROR... BUT NOTHING HAPPENS...



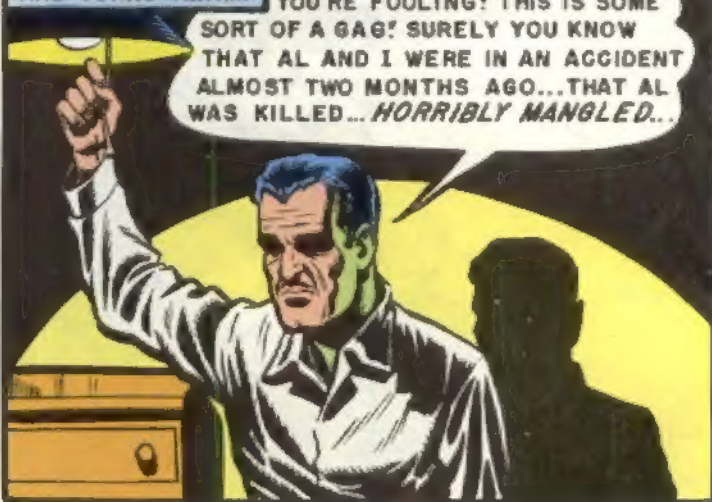
YOU RUSH INTO HIS APARTMENT! IT IS DARK! CARL OBJECTS! YOU TELL HIM THE STORY! YOU BLURT IT OUT... EVERYTHING! THE CRASH... HOW YOU WOKE UP... THE PEOPLE THAT SCREAMED WHEN THEY SAW YOU! EXCEPT CARL... *CARL* DID NOT SCREAM! CARL... YOUR *FRIEND*...

YOU JOKE WITH ME...
WHOEVER YOU ARE...



HE STARES AT YOU, BLANKLY! THERE IS NO RECOGNITION! 'DON'T YOU KNOW ME, CARL? DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE YOUR OLD FRIEND... *AL*?' YOU SAY! HE SHAKES HIS HEAD AND TURNS AWAY...

YOU'RE FOOLING! THIS IS SOME SORT OF A GAG! SURELY YOU KNOW THAT AL AND I WERE IN AN ACCIDENT ALMOST TWO MONTHS AGO... THAT AL WAS KILLED... *HORRIBLY MANGLED*...



...AND I LOST MY SIGHT! THAT I AM TOTALLY BLIND!



YOU, *DEAD*! YOU GASP! YOU LOOK AROUND! A MIRROR! YOU GET UP... STAGGER TOWARDS IT...



...AND LOOK IN!



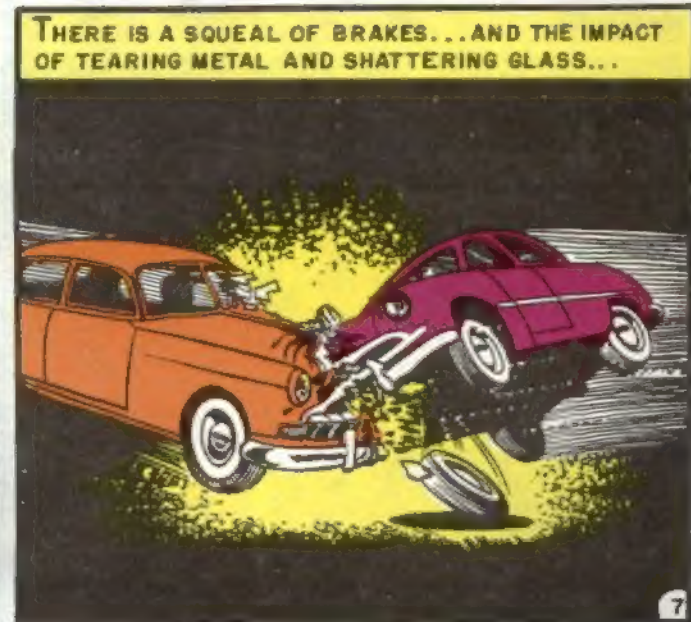
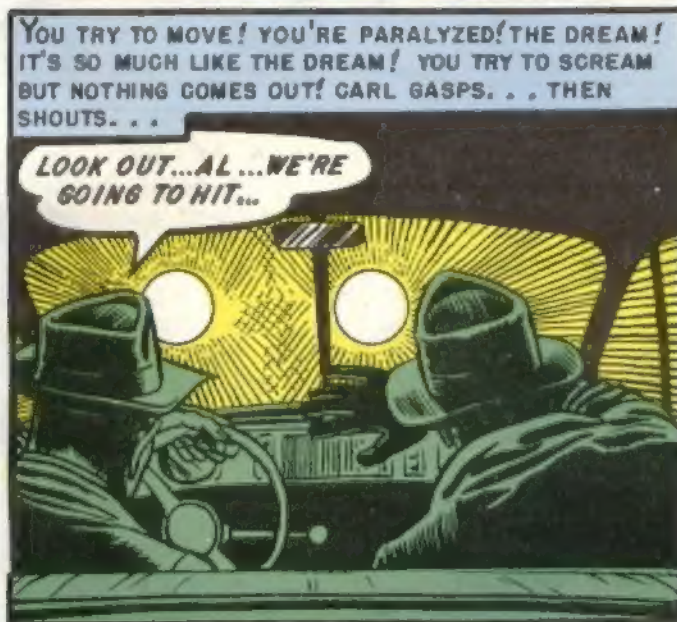
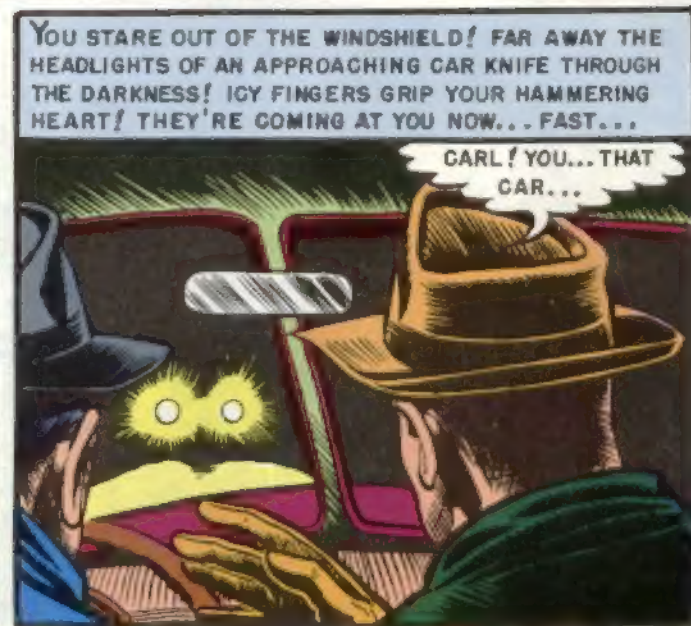
YOU SCREAM! YOU OPEN YOUR *ROTTED, TORN, DECOMPOSED MOUTH* AND SCREAM!



CARL IS AT YOUR SIDE SHAKING YOU... SHAKING YOU...

AL... AL... AL...!





YOU FEEL YOURSELF THROWN FORWARD...A BLINDING LIGHT... A SHOOTING PAIN! THEN THE DARKNESS CLOSES IN... AND YOU'RE FLOATING IN A SEA OF VELVET BLACK...



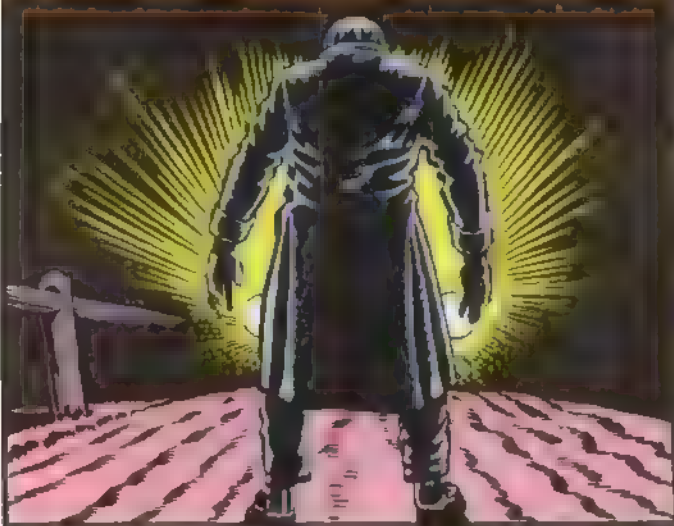
YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! YOU CAN SEE THE STARS... ABOVE YOU... TWINKLING! A LEAF FLOATS FROM THE TREE OVERHEAD TO EARTH! YOU ARE LYING AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...



YOU LIFT YOUR HEAD AND GAZE DOWN TOWARD YOUR FEET! THE DREAM...SO MUCH LIKE THE DREAM...



YOU STRUGGLE TO YOUR FEET! THE ROAD IS BARE! THERE IS NO SIGN OF THE WRECK! FROM FAR OFF... THE SOUND OF A MOTOR TELLS YOU OF AN APPROACHING CAR! YOU STEP OUT INTO THE ROAD...



THE DREAM IS *REAL*! YOU *KNOW* WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN! HE SEES YOUR FACE! YOU STEEL YOURSELF FOR HIS REACTION! IT COMES! A *HAUNTING TERRIFIED SCREAM*

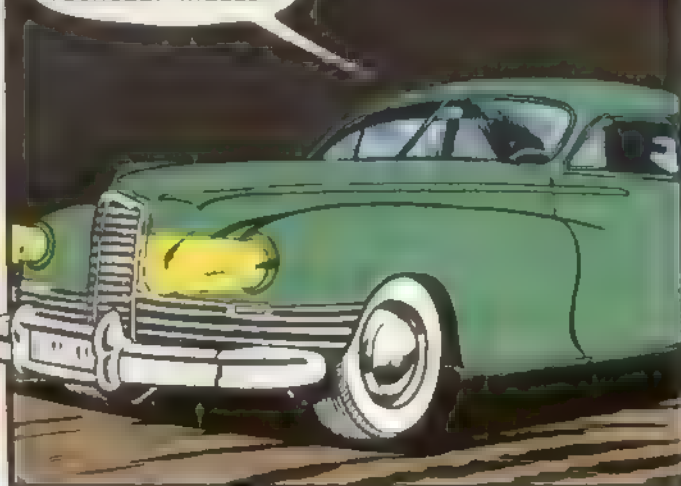


YOU'RE DEAD! YOU KNOW IT, NOW! DEAD! AND THIS TIME, IT *ISN'T* A DREAM...

THE END

THE SMELL... THE SICKENING SMELL OF ROTTED FLESH BURNS YOUR NOSTRILS! SO MUCH LIKE THE DREAM...ONLY NOW YOU *KNOW* WHAT THE STENCH IS! THE CAR STOPS! YOU MOVE TOWARD IT...

CRAZY FOOL! DO YOU WANT TO GET YOURSELF KILLED?



HEH, HEH! WELL, KIDDIES! THAT'S IT! LIKE IT? LIKE BEING A *CORPSE*? WELL, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET USED TO IT! IT'S *BOUND* TO HAPPEN... *EVENUALLY*. OH, COME, COME! WHY THE *GRAVE* LOOK? YOU'VE GOT TIME! HEH, HEH! MAYBE YOU'LL KNOW IT'S COMING BY HAVING A DREAM LIKE POOR AL IN THIS STORY!



IF YOU DO, YOU'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO! IN THE MEANTIME, YOU CAN LOOK FORWARD TO SOME MORE CHILLING TALES IN THIS BOOK! COMPOSE YOURSELF! READY? O.K. THEN, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE *OLD WITCH*!

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YES! IT'S *ME* AGAIN! *THE OLD WITCH*... MISTRESS OF THE *HAUNT OF FEAR*! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! *SEE?* THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON IS LEAPING HIGHER AND HIGHER! MY EVIL BREW IS STEAMING AND BUBBLING! *SO COME IN...* COME IN AND GAZE INTO THE SWIRLING, BOILING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON! GAZE DEEP... AND SOON YOU'LL SEE A GRIPPING TERRIFYING TALE UNFOLD! A TALE I CALL...

LAST RESPECTS!



THE RUSTY HINGES SQUEALED A HORRIFIED PROTEST AS HE PUSHED THE CEMETERY GATE OPEN! OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON CAST GREEN SHADOWS ON THE MOUNDS BEFORE THE GREY HEADSTONES...

I... I'M COMING, ANNA... I'M COMING!



HE STOOD FOR A MOMENT, HESITATING BEFORE THE YAWNING OPENING IN THE IRON FENCE, THEN MOVED THROUGH... WHERE ARE YOU, ANNA? WHICH WAY...?



UP THE GRASS CARPETED PATH, PAST THE GRAVES OF THOSE LONG DEAD, THE MAN ANTHONY COLTON 'STUMBLER' IN HIS HANDS HE CLUTCHED A PAPER BAG 'EVERY SO OFTEN, HE STOPPED AND LOOKED ABOUT... SEARCHING... SEARCHING...



HELP ME, ANNA! I DON'T KNOW MY WAY! GUIDE ME, ANNA! GUIDE ME TO YOUR GRAVE!

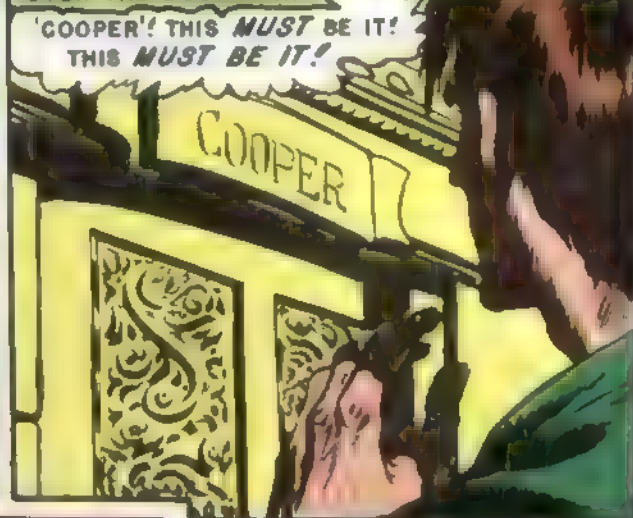
SUDDENLY HE SAW IT STANDING COLD AND STILL IN THE WHITE MOONLIGHT. THE MAUSOLEUM! IT ROSE ABOVE THE GRAVE STONES LIKE A SKYSCRAPER RISES ABOVE THE SPRAWLING TENEMENTS OF A GREAT CITY.. MAJESTIC... IMPOSING... CONTEMPTUOUS...



THAT MAUSOLEUM... PERHAPS...

ANNA HAD COME FROM A RICH FAMILY! ANTHONY EDGED CLOSER! THEN HE SAW IT! THE LETTERS CUT DEEP AND DARK IN THE GLEAMING MARBLE OVER THE DOORWAY...

'COOPER'! THIS MUST BE IT! THIS MUST BE IT!



ANTHONY BREATHED A SILENT PRAYER AS HE APPROACHED THE HUGE METAL DOOR! SUPPOSE IT SHOULD BE LOCKED! HE CLOSED HIS EYES AND LEANED AGAINST IT.. OPEN! OH, THANK GOD IT'S OPEN!



THE DOOR SWUNG SILENTLY! THE HINGES HAD BEEN WELL OILED TO PREVENT SQUEEKS FROM INTRUDING UPON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE RECENT FUNERAL! ANTHONY STEPPED IN.



THE GASKET STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR... SILENT... STILL! ANTHONY GASPED, THEN THREW HIMSELF PROSTRATE UPON IT AND WEPT... QUIETLY... PITIFULLY...



AFTER A WHILE, THE HOARSE SOBBING STOPPED! HE STOOD UP AND OPENED THE PAPER BAG! THE SHARP CRACKLE OF THE PAPER ECHOED FROM THE WINDOWLESS WALLS IN AN ABNORMAL VOLUME...

I... I BROUGHT IT, ANNA! I BROUGHT IT FOR YOU TO... TO SLEEP WITH... *FOREVER.*

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE FURRY LITTLE ANIMALS THAT THEY GIVE AWAY AT AMUSEMENT PARKS WHEN YOU KNOCK OVER THE STACK OF BRUISED WOODEN BOTTLES! ANTHONY BRUSHED IT AGAINST HIS FACE FOR A MOMENT, THEN LAID IT REVERENTLY UPON THE COFFIN LID...

HERE IT IS... ANNA... HERE...

ANTHONY SHOOK HIS HEAD! THEN HE TRIED THE LID! IT WAS SEALED CLOSED! HE SIGNED...

...IT'S NO GOOD THIS WAY, ANNA! YOU CAN'T FEEL IT... OUT HERE...

ANTHONY GAZED DOWN AT THE CASKET WITH THE FURRY MOUND LYING ON THE LID! HE STARED INTO THE BLACK WOOD OF THE STUDDED BOX! FROM FAR AWAY THE MUSIC DRIFTED TO HIM... HAPPY MUSIC... LAUGHTER! A MERRY-GO-ROUND... GOING ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND...

TONY! LET'S RIDE IT.

SURE, ANNA! SURE! C'MON!

THOSE STOLEN HOURS OF HAPPINESS! THAT DAY AT THE AMUSEMENT PARK WHEN HE WON ANNA THAT FURRY LITTLE THING...

OH, TONY, TONY! YOU DID IT! YOU DID IT!

FOR YOU, ANNA! JUST FOR YOU!

HERE YOU ARE, DEAD-EYE! HERE'S YOUR PRIZE!

THEN THE MUSIC FADED AWAY AND THE SOUND OF THE CAR MOTOR REPLACED IT... THE HUM OF THE TWELVE CYLINDERS...

DON'T YOU THINK YOU'D BETTER GET IN BACK, ANNA? WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE HOUSE!

OH, TONY DARLING! WHY DOES IT HAVE TO END? WHY?

AND THEN THE MOTOR STOPPED! ANNA GOT OUT OF THE FRONT SEAT OF THE IMPRESSIVE LIMOUSINE, AND TONY OPENED THE REAR DOOR FOR HER! THEN HE PUT ON THE BRASS-BUTTONED CHAUFFEUR'S COAT, AND THE PATENT-LEATHER PEAKED CAP...

WHEN CAN WE DO THIS AGAIN, TONY? WHEN?

THE CAR IS ALWAYS AT YOUR DISPOSAL, MISS ANNA!

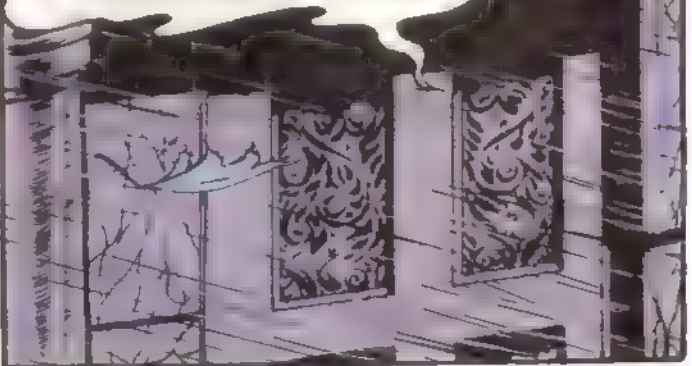
OH, TONY! DON'T JOKE WITH ME!
KISS ME, MY DARLING! TELL
YOUR WIFE YOU LOVE HER!

I LOVE YOU,
ANNA!



HE STOOD THERE, STARING AT THE CASKET! OUTSIDE,
A CLAP OF THUNDER EXPLODED! THE MAUSOLEUM DOOR
SLAMMED WITH THE SUDDEN GUST OF HOT WIND! THE
RAIN BEGAN FALLING...

IT'S RAINING, ANNA! RAINING LIKE
THAT NIGHT... THAT NIGHT YOU CAME
TO MY ROOM ABOVE THE GARAGE...



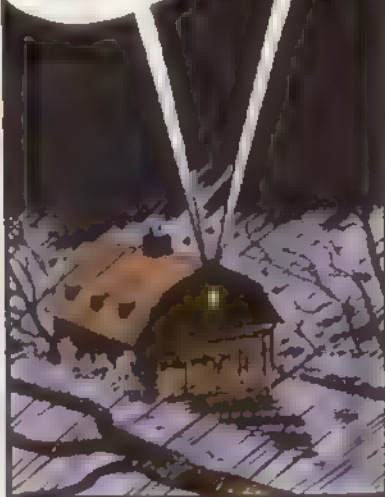
ANNA! WHAT ARE
YOU DOING HERE?

I CAN'T STAND
IT ANY LONGER,
TONY! WE'VE
GOT TO TELL
MY UNCLE!



DON'T BE FOOLISH,
ANNA! YOU KNOW
WHAT WOULD
HAPPEN! HE'D
DISOWN YOU...
CUT YOU OFF
WITHOUT A
CENT!

I DON'T
CARE!
I DON'T
CARE!



YOU'RE FORGETTING
ONE THING, ANNA!
YOU'RE UNDERAGE!
HE CAN ANNUL THE
MARRIAGE!

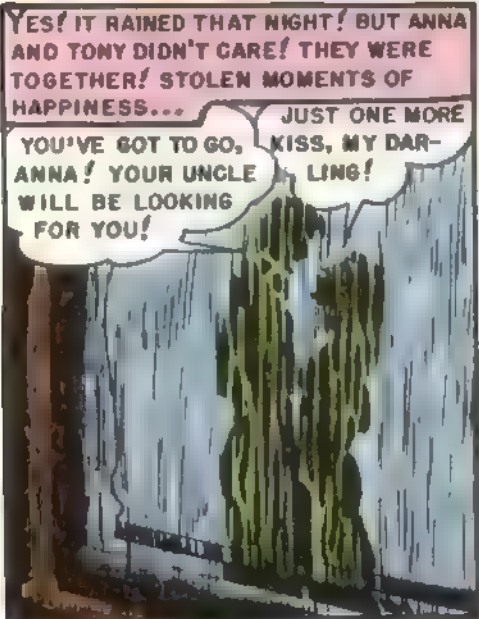
HE WOULDN'T,
HE WOULDN'T!



YES! IT RAINED THAT NIGHT! BUT ANNA
AND TONY DIDN'T CARE! THEY WERE
TOGETHER! STOLEN MOMENTS OF
HAPPINESS...

JUST ONE MORE
KISS, MY DAR-
LING!

YOU'VE GOT TO GO,
ANNA! YOUR UNCLE
WILL BE LOOKING
FOR YOU!



ONE MORE KISS AND THEN SHE LEFT! SHE HURRIED ACROSS THE SOP-
PING GROUNDS... HER FLIMSY DRESS CLINGING TO HER SKIN, RAIN-
SOAKED! AND WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR...

WHERE WERE YOU? WHERE
WERE YOU?

I... I TOOK A WALK, UNCLE!
I GOT CAUGHT IN THE RAIN!



HE STOOD BEFORE ANNA...THERE IN THAT DRAFTY MANSION'HE ACCUSED HER...INSULTED HER...

DON'T LIE TO ME! IT'S BEEN RAINING FOR HOURS! I SAW YOU COME ACROSS THE LAWN! YOU'VE BEEN TO THE GARAGE! TO HIM! I KNOW! I'VE SEEN THE WAY HE LOOKS AT YOU! DON'T THINK I'M BLIND! DON'T THINK I DON'T KNOW YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING ON...

UNCLE! STOP IT! STOP IT! I CAN'T STAND YOUR EVIL INSINUATIONS!

IF YOU MUST KNOW, WE'RE MARRIED!

WHAT? MARRIED TO THAT...THAT...

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY! I LOVE HIM! THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

SILLY FOOL! I'LL HAVE THE MARRIAGE ANNULLED! I WON'T LET YOU THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY...

SHE WAS IN BED THE NEXT DAY 'PNEUMONIA' ANTHONY CAME TO SEE HER...

GO AWAY! YOU'RE NOT WANTED HERE!

BUT I'M HER HUSBAND, MR. COOPER!

YOU WON'T BE FOR LONG! I'VE STARTED ANNULMENT PROCEEDINGS! SHE'S UNDERAGE...

PLEASE! LET ME SEE HER! I LOVE HER! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

HE TURNED TONY AWAY! THE DOCTOR CAME... AND TONY STOPPED HIM AS HE WAS LEAVING...

HOW IS SHE, DOCTOR?

SHE'S FAILING, TONY! DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT TO LIVE!

WHILE INSIDE...

TONY GASP... I WANT TONY!

NO, NO! YOU'RE FINISHED WITH HIM! FINISHED!

AND SO SHE DIED! UP TO THE END, HER UNCLE HAD REFUSED TO LET TONY SEE HER! THE FUNERAL HAD BEEN HELD THAT AFTERNOON! TONY HAD NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO ATTEND! BUT, NOW HE WAS HERE...

YES, ANNA! I'M HERE!
AND EVERYTHING IS
ALL RIGHT, NOW! I'VE
JUST KILLED HIM!
I'VE JUST *KILLED*
YOUR UNCLE!



FROM SOMEWHERE A
STREAM OF WATER RAN
DOWN THE STONE WALL
OF THE MAUSOLEUM...
DOWN THE WALL ONTO
THE COLD FLOOR AND
UNDER THE CASKET...
THE RAIN... COMING IN...



TONY TURNED TO GO! IT WAS
OVER... FINISHED! NOW, HE
WAS GOING AWAY! THE OLD
MAN... WAS DEAD! ANNA'S
DEATH HAD BEEN REVENGED...
GOOD-BYE, ANNA! SOMEDAY...
I'LL COME BACK! SOMEDAY...



HE TUGGED AT THE HUGE MAUSOLEUM DOOR! IT
DID NOT MOVE! IT WAS...

LOCKED! GOOD
LORD! HOW'LL I
GET OUT OF HERE?



TONY PULLED AND WRENCHED AT THE DOOR! IT WAS NO
USE! SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO COME AND OPEN IT FROM
THE OTHER SIDE...

HELP ME! HELP ME, SOMEBODY!
PLEASE... LET ME OUT!



A CLAP OF THUNDER WAS THE ONLY REPLY! TONY HAMMERED
AT THE METAL DOOR UNTIL HIS FISTS WERE RAW AND BLOOD
OOZED FROM THEM...

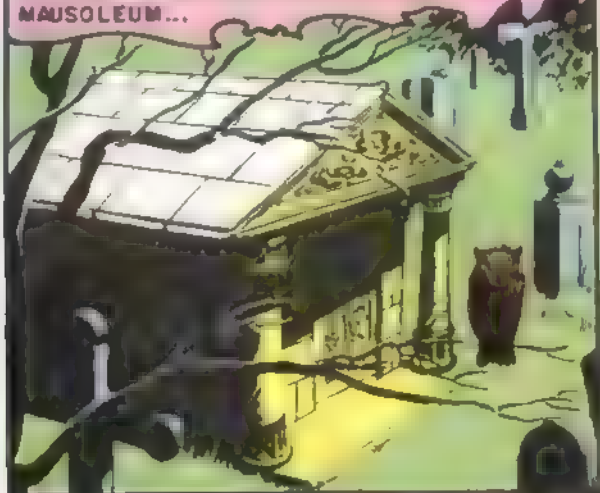
I... I'LL *STARVE* TO DEATH...
PLEASE... GOD... SOMEONE... SOB... SOB...



THE RAIN FELL INCESSANTLY! IT FORMED LITTLE
RIVERS THAT RAN OFF BETWEEN THE HEADSTONES!
INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM, A STEADY SOBBING
ECHOED THE FALLING OF THE RAINDROPS...



THE NIGHT PASSED AND THE DAY DAWNED! AND THE DAY PASSED...AND NO ONE CAME TO THAT PART OF THE GEMETERY! SO NO ONE HEARD THE KNOCKING...THE CALLING FROM THE MAUSOLEUM...



A WEEK WENT BY...AND EVERY DAY THE KNOCKING...THE HAMMERING CONTINUED! BUT NO ONE HEARD...EXCEPT A FRIGHTENED TRAMP ONE EVENING AT TWILIGHT WHO RAN OFF, TERRIFIED! THE WEEK STRETCHED TO TWO WEEKS...THE POUNDING WAS BECOMING FAINTER NOW! BUT TONY WAS *STILL ALIVE!* THEN, ALMOST *A MONTH LATER...* THE BEATING AND THE CALLING STOPPED...



THE DAY FOLLOWING TONY'S DEATH, AFTER HAVING BEEN LOCKED IN THE MAUSOLEUM FOR ALMOST A MONTH, THEY FOUND HIM! THE ENGRAVER WAS DELIVERING THE PLAQUE FOR ANNA'S COFFIN...AND WHEN THEY SWUNG OPEN THE MASSIVE METAL DOOR...



GOOD LORD! LOOK! A DEAD MAN!

IT'S THAT *CHAUFFEUR* OF THEIRS! THE ONE THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

HE'S ONLY BEEN DEAD A DAY OR SO...

WHAT'S *THIS...* AROUND HIM!

BONES!

HEY...THIS COFFIN'S BEEN PRIED OPEN...



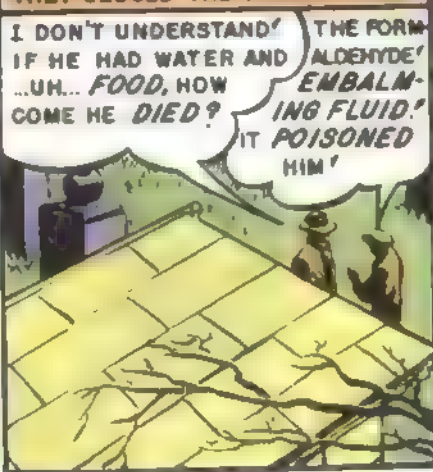
THE GUY MUST HAVE BEEN TRAPPED IN HERE! HE STAYED ALIVE BY CATCHING WATER IN THIS URN...

AND *EATING...* OH GOD, NO!



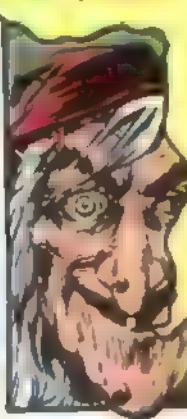
THEY TOOK TONY AWAY! THEY PUT THE WHITE PICKED-CLEAN BONES BACK INTO THE COFFIN AND SEALED IT UP AGAIN! THEN THEY CLOSED THE MAUSOLEUM...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND! IF HE HAD WATER AND ...UH... FOOD, HOW COME HE DIED? THE FORM ALDEHYDE! EMBALMING FLUID! IT POISONED HIM!



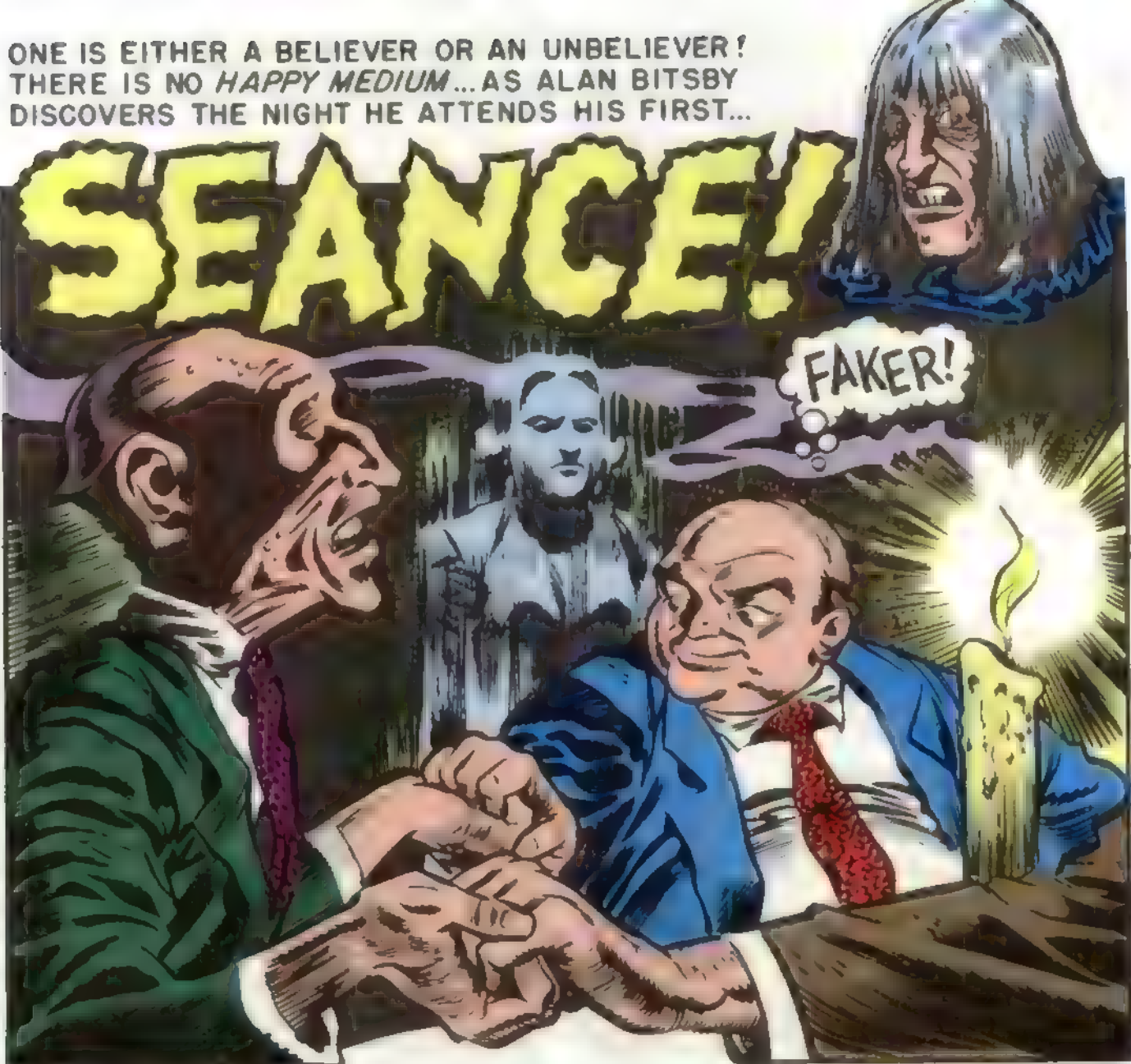
HEE, HEE! AND THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR READERS! TONY, ANNA, THE CRUEL OLD UNCLE...THEY'RE ALL DEAD NOW! EACH ONE KILLED THE OTHER...YOU MIGHT SAY! ANYWAY, IT WAS A *MEATY* LITTLE TALE, WASN'T IT? I HOPE YOU DIDN'T...ER...

CHOKED UP... AT THE SAD ENDING! WELL, IF YOUR STOMACH'S STOPPED DOING FLIP-FLOPS, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE *CRYPT-KEEPER!* HE HAS ANOTHER TALE FOR YOU TO *CHEW ON!* BYE, NOW! SEE YOU LATER ON WITH ANOTHER POT OF PUTRESCENCE!



ONE IS EITHER A BELIEVER OR AN UNBELIEVER!
THERE IS NO *HAPPY MEDIUM*...AS ALAN BITSBY
DISCOVERS THE NIGHT HE ATTENDS HIS FIRST...

SEANCE!



MY STORY BEGINS AT THE HOME OF WALTON FARNUM, ACCOUNTANT FOR THE FIRM OF BITSBY & COMPANY. AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT, WALTON IS HARD AT WORK 'ENTERTAINING' MR. AND MRS. ALAN BITSBY...THE BOSS AND HIS WIFE! LET'S SEE WHAT'S GOING ON---

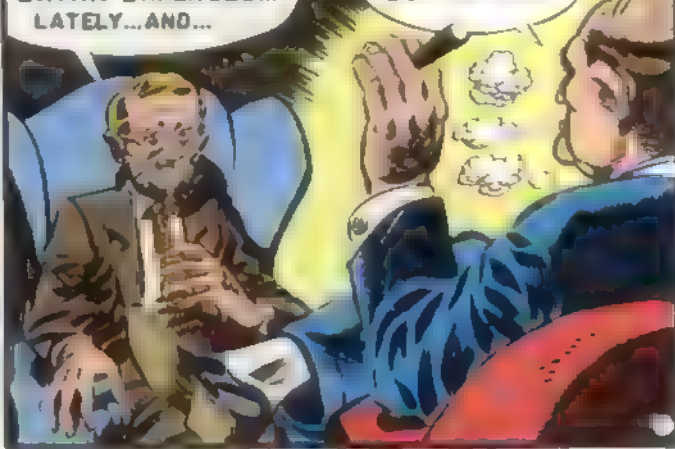
I...I HAVE TO *APOLOGIZE* FOR MY WIFE, A.B.! SHE'S *NEVER THIS LATE!*

QUITE ALL RIGHT, WALTON! QUITE ALL RIGHT!



MR. BITSBY! I...I FIND THAT I AM...*FORGED* TO ASK YOU FOR A *RAISE* IN SALARY! THERE HAVE BEEN *EXTRA EXPENSES*... LATELY...AND...

LET'S NOT TALK *BUSINESS* TONIGHT, WALTON! SEE ME IN THE *MORNING!* I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN *DO* FOR YOU!





OH, THANK YOU, MR. BITSBY! **THANK YOU!**

QUITE ALL RIGHT, WALTON! QUITE...



DEAR MR. AND MRS. BITSBY! I'M **SO** SORRY I'M LATE... BUT THE **SEANCE** TOOK **SO LONG** TODAY!

SEANCE? WHAT **SEANCE?**



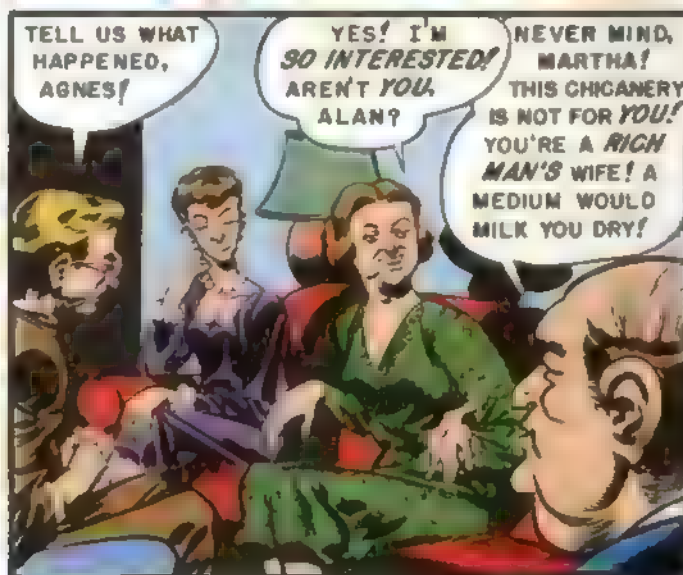
THIS WHAT YOU MEAN BY **EXTRA EXPENSES**, WALTON? SENDING YOUR WIFE TO **SEANCES!**

SHE...SHE **WANTS** TO GO, MR. BITSBY! AND IF IT MAKES HER **HAPPY...**



HAPPY! BAH! IDIOTIC NONSENSE! THOSE MEDIUMS ARE **FAKES! THIEVES AND FAKES!** THEY PRY ON LONESOME OLD PEOPLE... TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR LOSSES! WHOM DOES HE 'PRODUCE' FOR YOU, MRS. WALTON... YOUR **MOTHER?**

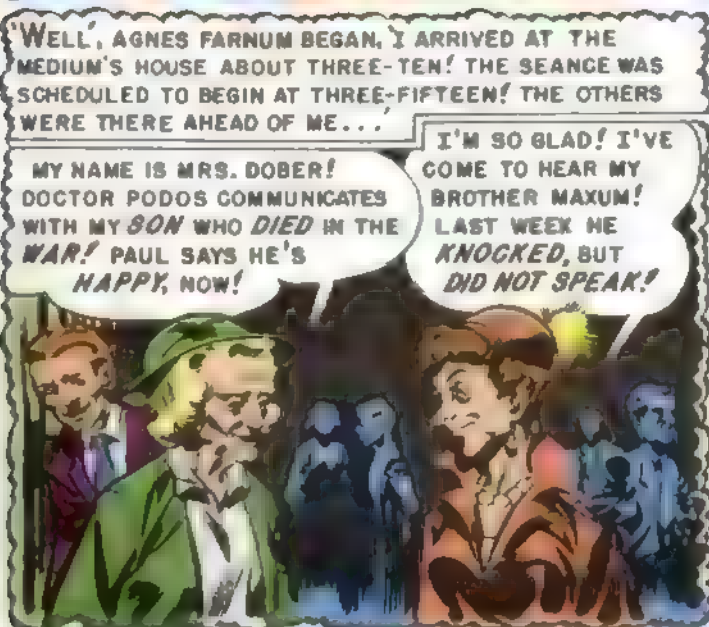
NO... MY POOR DEPARTED BROTHER, MAXUM! AND TODAY I HEARD HIS **VOICE...**



TELL US WHAT HAPPENED, AGNES!

YES! I'M **SO INTERESTED!** AREN'T YOU, ALAN?

NEVER MIND, MARTHA! THIS CHICANERY IS NOT FOR YOU! YOU'RE A **RICH MAN'S** WIFE! A MEDIUM WOULD MILK YOU DRY!



'WELL', AGNES FARNUM BEGAN, 'I ARRIVED AT THE MEDIUM'S HOUSE ABOUT THREE-TEN! THE SEANCE WAS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT THREE-FIFTEEN! THE OTHERS WERE THERE AHEAD OF ME...'

MY NAME IS MRS. DOBER! DOCTOR PODOS COMMUNICATES WITH MY **SON** WHO **DIED** IN THE **WAR!** PAUL SAYS HE'S **HAPPY, NOW!**

I'M **SO GLAD!** I'VE COME TO HEAR MY BROTHER MAXUM! LAST WEEK HE **KNOCKED**, BUT **DID NOT SPEAK!**



YES! I REMEMBER! IT WAS TOO BAD! THE DOCTOR WORKED **SO** HARD! BUT DID YOU HEAR MY WIFE, SARAH? HOW **NEAR** SHE WAS?

YES, MR. HATCH! HER VOICE **WAS** STRONG!

THE DOCTOR SAYS HE'S GOING TO TRY TO MAKE MY **SON** **MATERIALIZE** TODAY!

SUDDENLY HE WAS IN THE ROOM! NO ONE SAW HIM COME IN! HIS DEEP, DARK, PIERCING EYES LOOKED FROM ONE OF US TO THE OTHER...

AH! I'M SO GLAD YOU'VE COME AGAIN, MRS. FARNUM! PERHAPS TODAY, YOUR BROTHER MAXUM WILL SPEAK TO US!

I HOPE SO, DOCTOR!



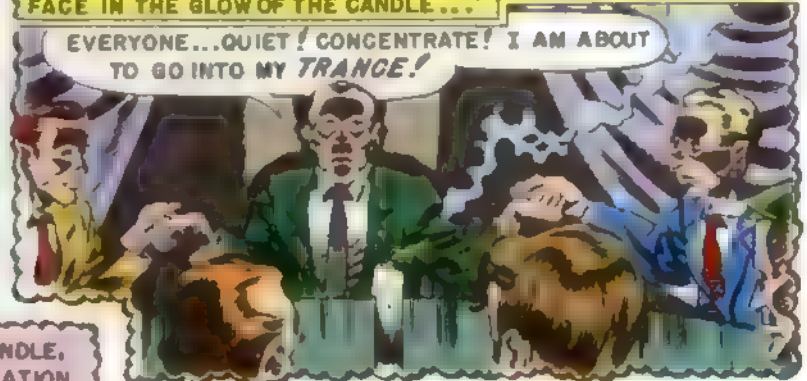
'WE SAT AROUND THE TABLE! DOCTOR PODOS TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS! THEN...

NOW! ALL JOIN HANDS! THE SEANCE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!



'MR. HATCH WAS ON MY LEFT! MRS. DOBER ON MY RIGHT! THE DOCTOR WAS DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM ME AND I COULD SEE HIS FACE IN THE GLOW OF THE CANDLE...

EVERYONE...QUIET! CONCENTRATE! I AM ABOUT TO GO INTO MY TRANCE!



I WATCHED HIS FACE! HE STARED INTO THE CANDLE, MUTTERING UNINTELLIGIBLE WORDS! PERSPIRATION BROKE OUT ON HIS FOREHEAD! HE WRITHED AS IF HE WERE IN PAIN! THEN...

HARVEY?

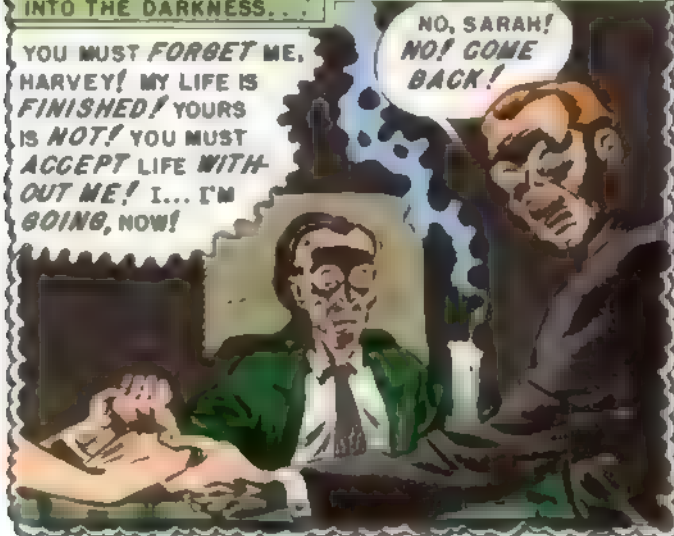
SARAH!
IS THAT YOU?



'THE MEDIUM TWISTED IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE AGONY! WE WATCHED MR. HATCH'S FACE! HE STARED WIDE-EYED INTO THE DARKNESS...

YOU MUST FORGET ME, HARVEY! MY LIFE IS FINISHED! YOURS IS NOT! YOU MUST ACCEPT LIFE WITHOUT ME! I... I'M GOING, NOW!

NO, SARAH!
NO! COME
BACK!



IT WAS MR. HATCH'S WIFE! HER VOICE WAS SAD... ALMOST A WAIL...

YES, HARVEY! IT IS I! WHY DO YOU KEEP SENDING FOR ME, HARVEY?

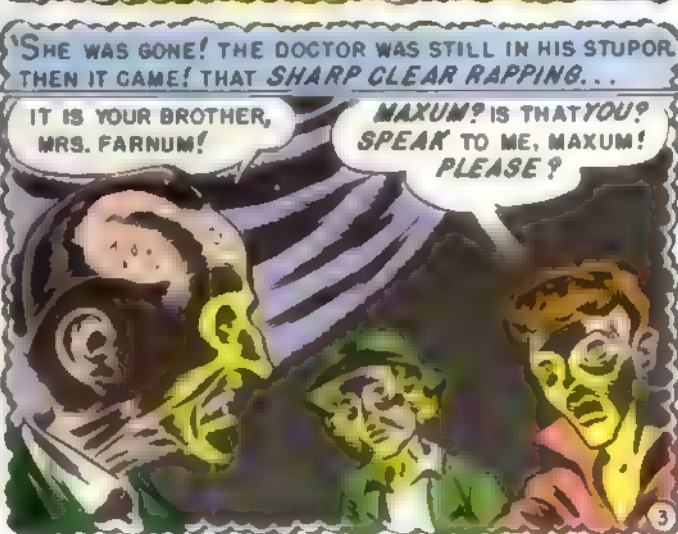
I...I NEED YOU, SARAH! NEED YOU SO!



'SHE WAS GONE! THE DOCTOR WAS STILL IN HIS STUPOR, THEN IT CAME! THAT SHARP CLEAR RAPPING...

IT IS YOUR BROTHER, MRS. FARNUM!

MAXUM? IS THAT YOU?
SPEAK TO ME, MAXUM!
PLEASE?



'I LISTENED! I STRAINED MY EARS! BUT I HEARD NOTHING! THEN... A VOICE... FAR AWAY...'

AGNES! CAN YOU HEAR ME?

OH, YES, MAXUM! I CAN HEAR YOU!



I CAN'T *STAY* LONG, AGNES! IT... IT'S SO *HARD!* MAYBE... MAYBE... *NEXT...* TIME...



MAXUM! WAIT! THERE'S SO *MUCH* I WANT TO ASK YOU...

HE'S *GONE*, MRS. FARNUM! DOCTOR PODOS COULDN'T HOLD HIM!

AT LEAST... AT LEAST I HEARD HIS *VOICE* TODAY...

MOTHER?



'MRS. DOBER'S FACE LIT UP! IT WAS HER SON, PAUL! THE ONE THAT DIED IN THE WAR...'

PAUL! IS THAT YOU? I'M HERE, PAUL!

I... I TOLD YOU LAST TIME, MOTHER! I'M HAPPY, NOW! WHY DID YOU COME BACK?



I WANT TO *SEE* YOU, PAUL! THE DOCTOR SAID HE'D TRY! PLEASE, DOCTOR! LET ME *SEE* HIM!

NO, MOTHER! NO! DON'T!



'SLOWLY A MIST ROSE IN THE DARKNESS! IT BEGAN TO TAKE SHAPE! IT WAS A MAN... IN UNIFORM! A SOLDIER...'

PAUL! I'M BEGINNING TO *SEE* YOU!

DON'T LOOK MOTHER! DON'T!

YAAAAAH!



'I SCREAMED! I COULDN'T HELP IT! I SAW HIM CLEARLY! HIS FACE WAS HALF-SHOT AWAY! IT WAS AWFUL... AWFUL...'

PAUL! MY PAUL! YOU'RE... *HURT!*

I TOLD YOU NOT TO TRY TO *SEE* ME, MOTHER! I ... TOLD... YOU...





THEN HE WAS GONE, AND THE SEANCE WAS OVER!

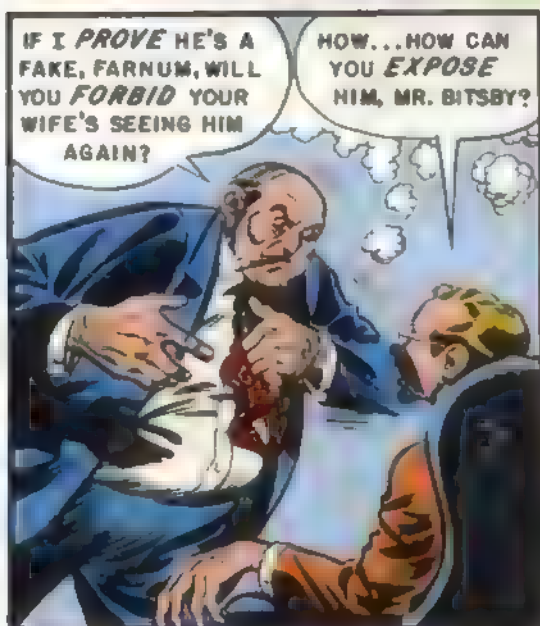
OUGH! IT GIVES ME THE CREEPS! DOESN'T IT YOU, ALAN?

FAKE! NOTHING BUT A FAKE, THAT'S WHAT HE IS!



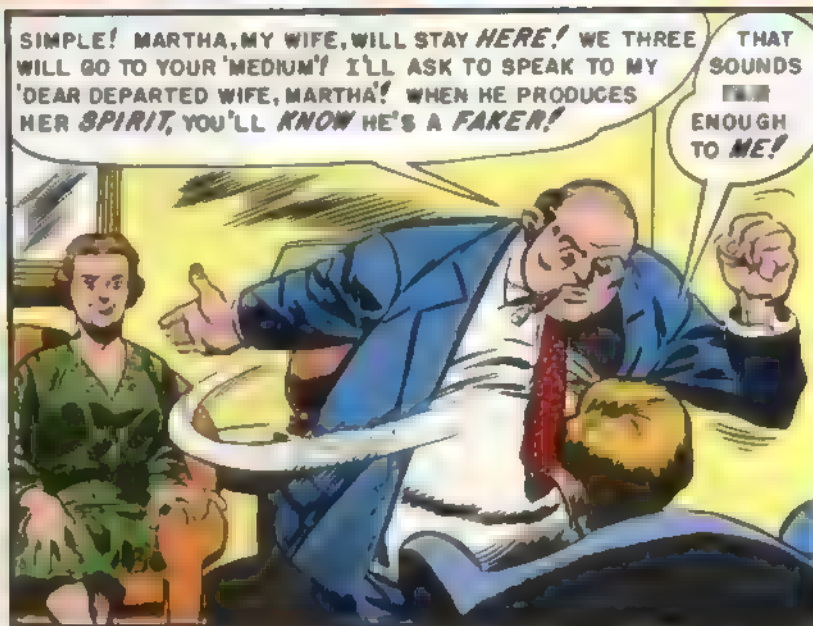
YOU'LL GET NO RAISE FROM ME, FARNUM, IF YOU INSIST UPON LETTING YOUR WIFE SPEND GOOD MONEY ON THAT TRASH!

BUT SHE HEARD HIS VOICE, MR. BITSBY! MAXUM'S VOICE...



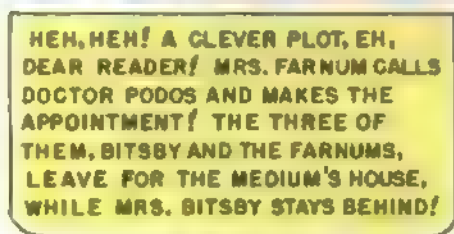
IF I PROVE HE'S A FAKE, FARNUM, WILL YOU FORBID YOUR WIFE'S SEEING HIM AGAIN?

HOW...HOW CAN YOU EXPOSE HIM, MR. BITSBY?

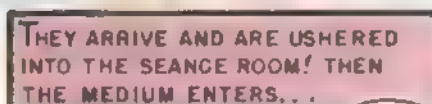
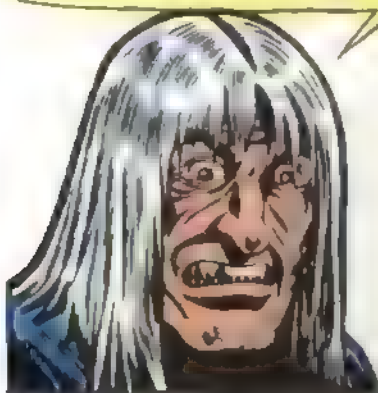


SIMPLE! MARTHA, MY WIFE, WILL STAY HERE! WE THREE WILL GO TO YOUR 'MEDIUM'! I'LL ASK TO SPEAK TO MY 'DEAR DEPARTED WIFE, MARTHA'! WHEN HE PRODUCES HER SPIRIT, YOU'LL KNOW HE'S A FAKER!

THAT SOUNDS ENOUGH TO ME!



HEH, HEH! A CLEVER PLOT, EH, DEAR READER! MRS. FARNUM CALLS DOCTOR PODOS AND MAKES THE APPOINTMENT! THE THREE OF THEM, BITSBY AND THE FARNUMS, LEAVE FOR THE MEDIUM'S HOUSE, WHILE MRS. BITSBY STAYS BEHIND!



THEY ARRIVE AND ARE USHERED INTO THE SEANCE ROOM! THEN THE MEDIUM ENTERS...



AH! SO THESE ARE THE PEOPLE YOU BROUGHT, MRS. FARNUM?

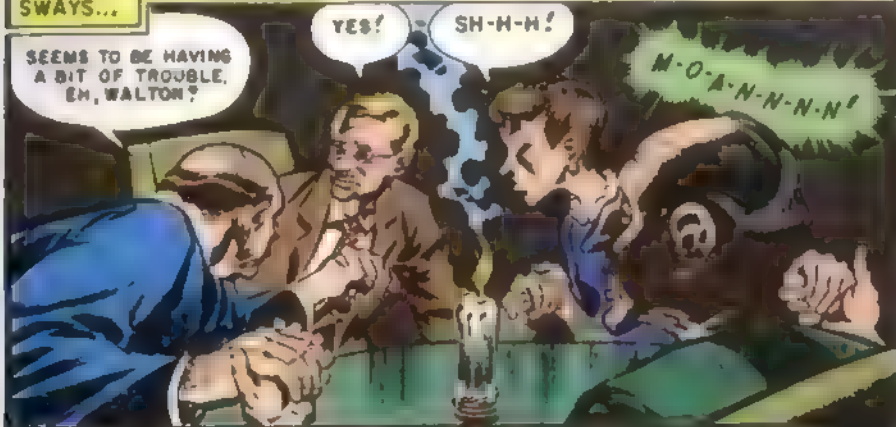
YES! MY HUSBAND...



... AND MR. BITSBY, OUR FRIEND! HE'S A... WIDOWER! HE'D LIKE TO COMMUNICATE WITH HIS DEAR DEPARTED WIFE, MARTHA!

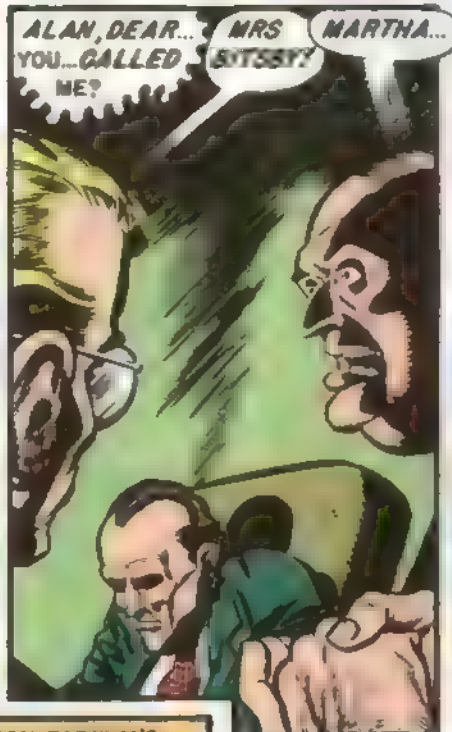
WOULDN'T YOU ALL SIT DOWN?

THE LIGHTS ARE LOWERED, AND THE SEANCE BEGINS! THEY ALL JOIN HANDS! THE DOCTOR GOES INTO HIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE! HE TWISTS AND SWAYS...

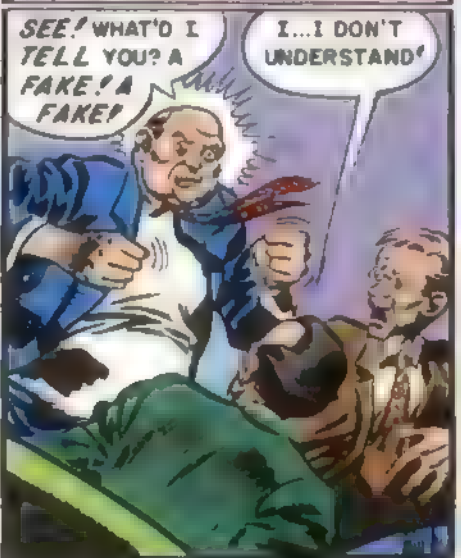


THE MEDIUM WRITHES NOW! HE SEEMS TO BE IN TERRIFIC PAIN! HIS FACE IS BATHED IN SWEAT! THE VEINS ON HIS FOREHEAD STAND OUT...

CAN'T SEEM TO BE ABLE... TO... ROUSE... SPIRIT... GASP!



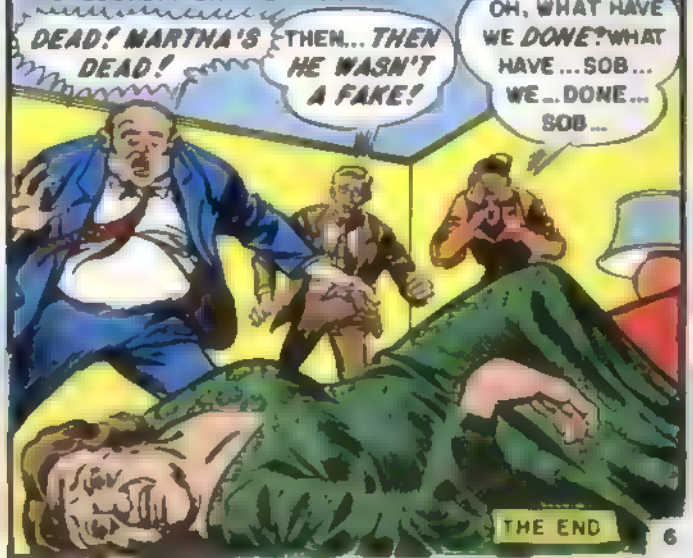
SUDDENLY, ALAN BITSBY JUMPS UP, RED-FACED IN ANGER...



THEY LEAVE! THEY GO HOME TO WALTON FARNUM'S HOUSE, CONVINCED! BITSBY IS TRIUMPHANT! AS WALTON OPENS THE DOOR, BITSBY HIDES HIM...

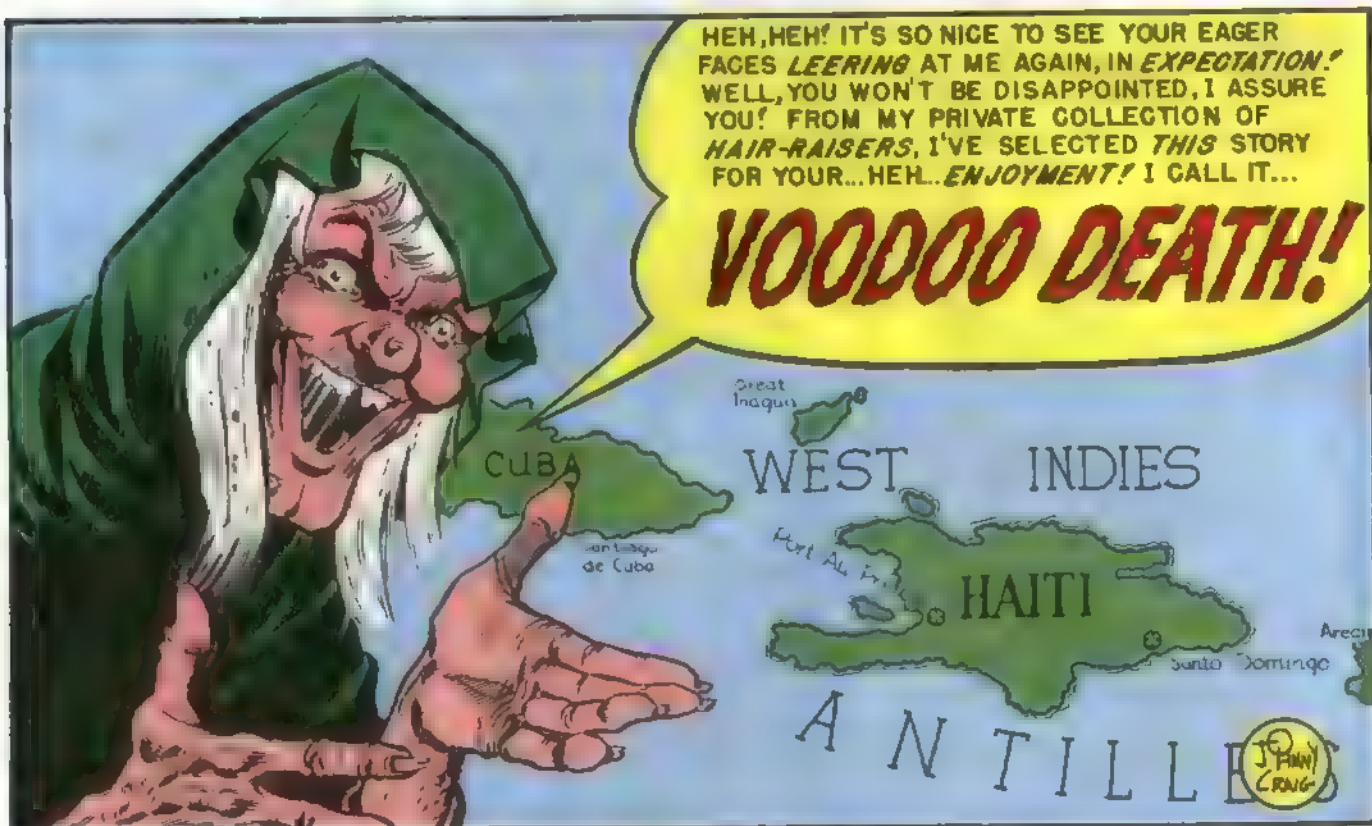


THEY RUSH INTO THE HOUSE! MARTHA BITSBY LIES GROTESQUELY ON THE FLOOR...



THE END

THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HEH! EVER READ *TRAVEL FOLDERS*? YOU KNOW... THOSE PAMPHLETS THAT TELL ABOUT ALL THE GLORIOUS WONDERS AND BEAUTIES OF THE WEST INDIES! PALM TREES... MOONLIGHT ON THE OCEAN... ETC... ETC.! *HEH! HEH! HEH!* ...STRANGE, ISN'T IT, THAT THEY NEVER MENTION *OTHER* INTERESTING SIGHTS, SIGHTS THAT TOURISTS ARE *NOT* TO SEE? SIGHTS LIKE... A *VOODOO RITUAL*?

HURRY UP, JAY... WE'RE ALMOST THERE!

CONFOUND IT, BILL! I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE BIT! ALMOST WISH WE'D NEVER COME TO *HAITI*!

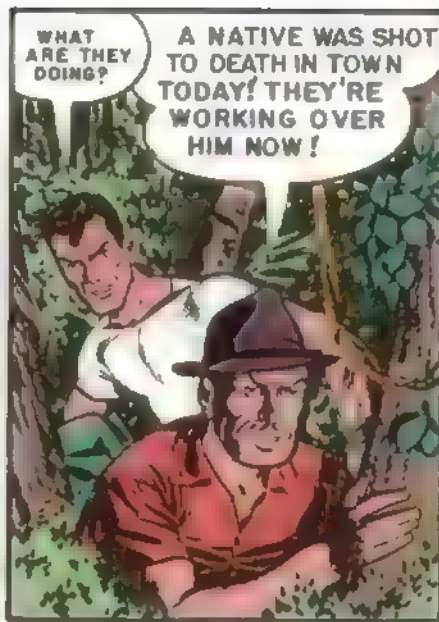


HAITI!... ISLAND OF BEAUTY... SERENITY!
HAITI!... ISLAND OF LEGENDS... MYSTERY!

JAY! THERE! LOOK! WE'RE JUST IN TIME!

FOR PETE'S SAKE, BILL, SHUT UP... OR THEY'LL HEAR US!





THE VOODOO DRUMS BEAT LOUDER AND THE HIGH PRIESTESS BENDS OVER THE BODY! THE NATIVES CLOSE IN AROUND HER, BLOCKING HER FROM VIEW...

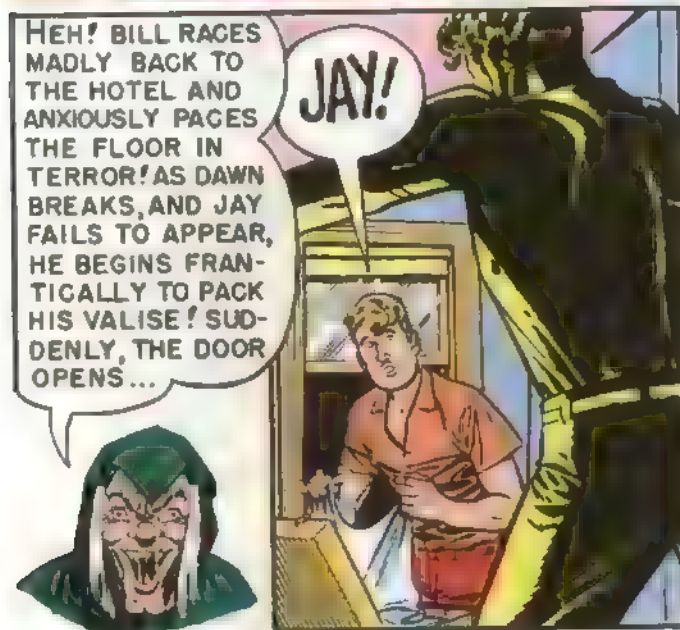


MINUTES LATER, THE CHANTING, SCREAMING NATIVES WITHDRAW... LEAVING THE PRIESTESS STANDING OVER THE BODY AND THE DOLL! NOW THERE IS AN EXPECTANT SILENCE...

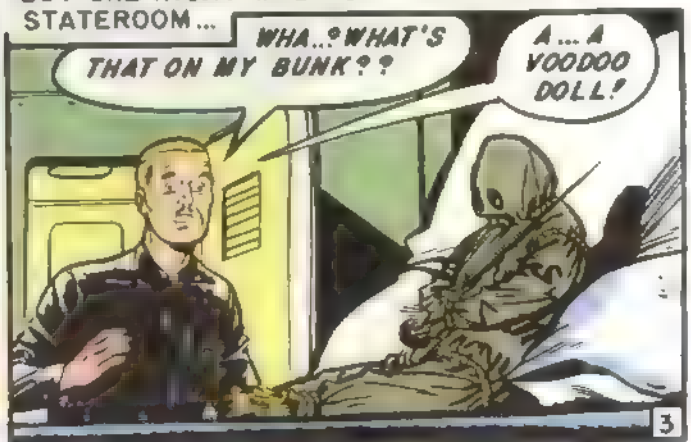


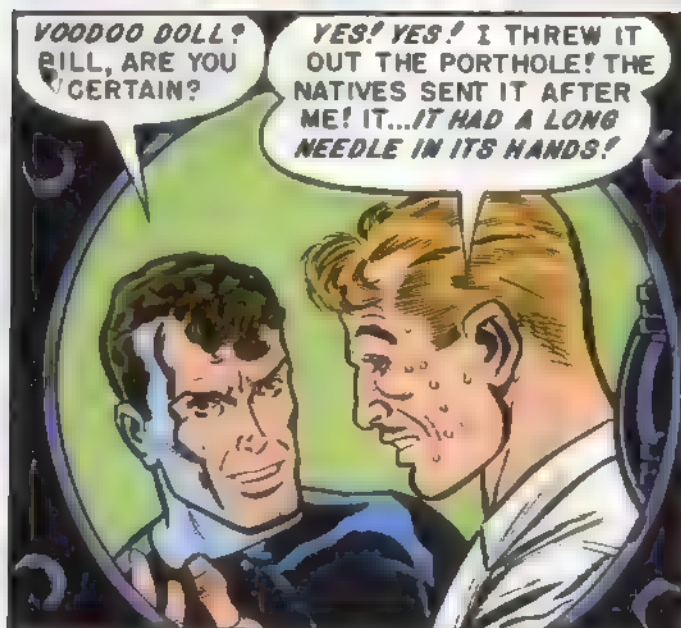
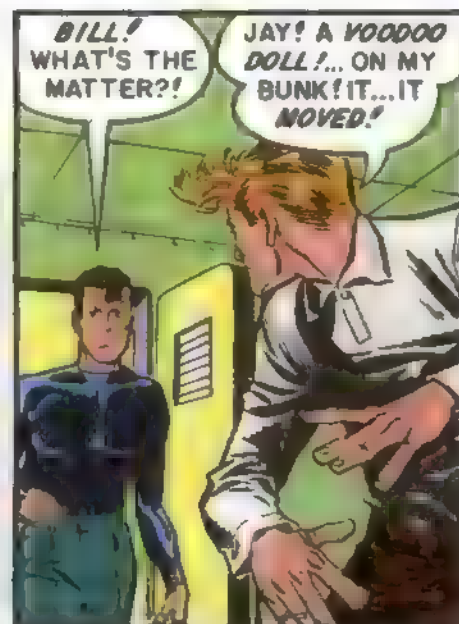
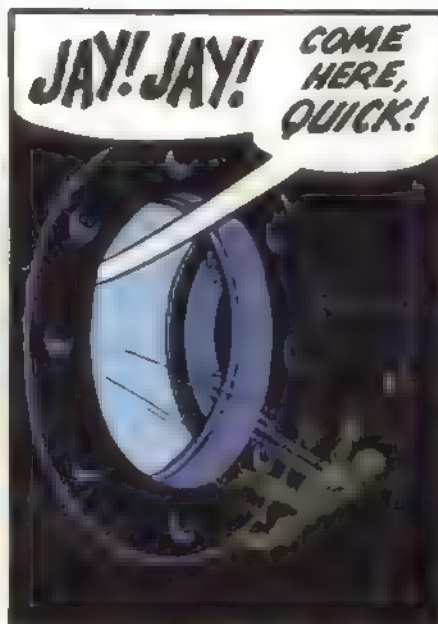
...AND THEN, THE DEAD NATIVE STIRS! HIS EYES OPEN, GLASSY AND EMPTY. ... AND HE RISES! THE DOLL STANDS UPRIGHT... AND THEN DARTS AWAY INTO THE JUNGLE!





THE TWO FRIENDS LEAVE FOR NEW YORK ON
THE NEXT BOAT. TWO DAYS OF COMPLETE
REST HAVE APPARENTLY SETTLED JAY'S
NERVES... AND THE FRIGHTFUL ORDEAL IN
HAITI IS ALMOST FORGOTTEN BY THEM BOTH!
BUT ONE NIGHT WHEN BILL ENTERS HIS
STATEROOM...





...STRANGE... NO RETURN ADDRESS... NO POSTAGE... WONDER WHAT'S IN IT...



CURIOUS, BILL HASTILY RIPS THE PACKAGE OPEN! AND THEN HIS HANDS TREMBLE... HIS MOUTH DROPS WIDE AS HE STARES AT THE CONTENTS...



FRIGHTENED TERRIBLY, BILL DASHES FROM THE ROOM! THEN HE STOPS...



I THREW IT IN THE FIRE! THE FLAMES WILL DESTROY IT! BUT...MAYBE...



...IT CAME BACK WHEN I THREW IT OUT THE PORTHOLE! IT CAN MOVE! IT MIGHT GET AWAY! I... I'D BETTER GO BACK... BETTER MAKE SURE!



...THERE'S THE BOX... THE PACKAGE... BUT WHERE'S THE DOLL?

IT'S GONE!



GONE! SOMEWHERE IN THIS ROOM! HIDING... WAITING TO POUNCE ON ME! WAITING TO STAB ME WITH THAT... THAT NEEDLE! HELP! HELP!

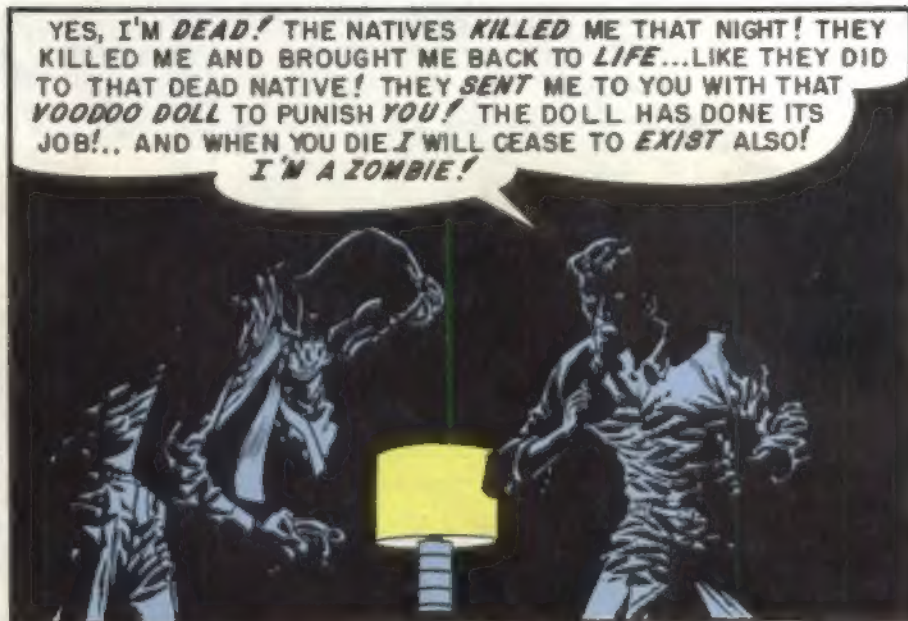






MY... MY
NECK!
GETTING
NUMB...
HURTS!

YES! THE NEEDLE
WAS POISONED!
SOON YOUR WHOLE
BODY WILL HURT!
THEN YOU'LL BE
DEAD...AS I AM
DEAD!



YES, I'M DEAD! THE NATIVES KILLED ME THAT NIGHT! THEY
KILLED ME AND BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE...LIKE THEY DID
TO THAT DEAD NATIVE! THEY SENT ME TO YOU WITH THAT
VOODOO DOLL TO PUNISH YOU! THE DOLL HAS DONE ITS
JOB!.. AND WHEN YOU DIE I WILL CEASE TO EXIST ALSO!
I'M A ZOMBIE!



YOU'RE DEAD! AND I'LL BE
DEAD (GASP) IN A MOMENT!
(GASP) THIS DOLL! IT...IT
KILLED ME! THIS WICKED,
VICIOUS VODOO DOLL!



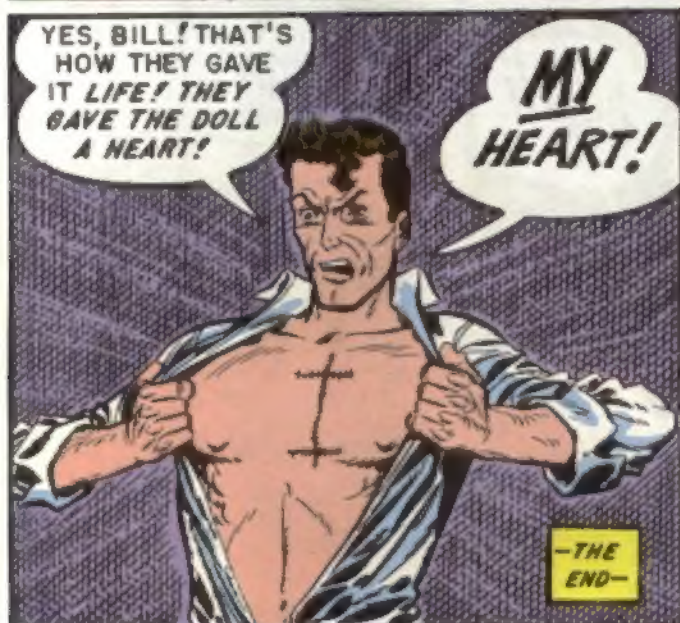
I'LL DESTROY IT!... RIP IT
TO SHREDS! RIP IT! (GASP)
TEAR IT!-?

WHA...
WHAT'S
THIS?



BILL'S RAGE SUDDENLY CEASES!
A SCREAM STRANGLES IN HIS
THROAT AS HE STARES DOWN AT
WHAT HIS HAND HOLDS. . .

GOOD LORD! IT'S A...
HEART! A HUMAN HEART!



YES, BILL! THAT'S
HOW THEY GAVE
IT LIFE! THEY
GAVE THE DOLL
A HEART!

MY
HEART!

-THE
END-



HEH! HEH! HEH! SUCH JOY! NOW WASN'T THAT
HEART-RENDING? OF COURSE, JAY COULD
HAVE TOLD BILL WHAT HAD HAPPENED, BUT
I GUESS HE JUST DIDN'T HAVE THE HEART!
WELL, BILL GOT THE POINT, HEH! HEH...IN THE
CUTTING CLIMAX TO THIS THROBBING TALE!
I HOPE I'LL BE SEEING YOU IN MY OWN
MAGAZINE, THE VAULT OF HORROR! UNTIL
THEN, FIENDS... BE OF *STOUT HEART*...
HEH, HEH, HEH!

**The Complete
EC HORROR
Library**

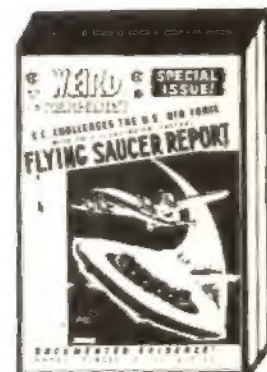
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